

IS IRELAND A NATION?

“**She is a nation.**”—Mr. PARNELL, House of Commons, May 13, 1886.

“We wish to see Ireland what God intended she should be—**a powerful nation.**”—Mr. T. M. HEALY, at Boston, Dec. 24, 1881.

“Has England any more right to keep **a neighbouring people in slavery** for her profit or pleasure than the planter of Jamaica or the slave-owner of Alabama had that right?”—Sir C. GAVAN DUFFY, *Contemporary Review*, May, 1886.

This is the demand of the Irish Nationalists—that Ireland shall have **a separate Parliament**, because the Irish (or rather the majority of Irish Catholics) are **a separate nation** from the inhabitants of Great Britain, are an oppressed and mis-governed nationality, who cannot get justice from the Imperial Parliament.

This demand (never before admitted by a responsible English statesman) is now suddenly conceded by Mr. Gladstone's Government. Liberal policy for the last 20 years has been to do justice to Ireland. Mr. Gladstone now asks us to take “**a new departure**” and set aside Liberal laws, however just, because, coming to Ireland “**in a foreign garb,**” they fail to conciliate the Irish National sentiment. His Chief Secretary, Mr. John Morley, compares Ireland under the rule of the Imperial Parliament to Greece or Bulgaria under the Turks, or Italy under the Austrians.

When our kinsfolk, the Americans of the Northern States, were asked, twenty-five years ago, to grant independence to the Southern Confederation as a separate nation, they replied that they could not “**subordinate geographical considerations to national sentiment.**”

We Englishmen are now asked to subordinate not only **geographical**, but **Imperial, economical, political and**

moral considerations to the national sentiment of the Irish Catholic majority.

Geographical: because Ireland is only sixty miles distant from England, and only twenty miles from Scotland. . .

Imperial: because the union of the vast British Empire will be seriously weakened by any loosening of the bonds of the United Kingdom.

Economical: because the trade and prosperity of England and Ireland will be undoubtedly injured by their separation.

Political: because the Parliament of the United Kingdom will be broken up and reduced to a Parliament of Great Britain alone.

And **Moral**, because England will be unable to fulfil her obligations to the loyal and law-abiding inhabitants of Ireland, who demand that they shall not be deserted.

Englishmen, will you subordinate all these considerations to Irish national sentiment? or will you not rather, like your American brethren, offer a **determined and successful resistance** to this attempt to create within the United Kingdom **two nations, two Parliaments, and two laws?**

Remember that if we once recognise the Irish Catholics as a **separate nation**, we cannot justly or logically refuse them that **complete independence** which is the right of every separate nation! Did not Mr. Parnell himself say at Cork, January 21, 1885:—"No man has the right to fix the boundary to the march of a nation."

Remember the words of Lord Spencer, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under Mr. Gladstone's last Government:—

"We hold that the continued union of Ireland with this country is of vital importance to us. **We feel like the Americans when the integrity of their country was threatened, and, if necessary, we must shed blood to maintain the strength and salvation of this country.**—Bristol, Nov. 14, 1881.